

Message Text

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11
ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SSC-01

SAM-01 /058 W
----- 073021

R 060612Z JUN 75
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5915
INFO AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL MELBOURNE
AMCONSUL SYDNEY

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: AS, PFOR
SUBJ: AUSTRALIAN CABINET RESHUFFLED

REF: CANBERRA 3611

1. SUMMARY. LABOR CABINET RESHUFFLED BY PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM
JUNE 5, WITH 13 SHIFTS OF GREATER OR LESSER SIGNIFICANCE
INVOLVED. BRIEF ANALYSIS OF CHANGES FOLLOWS, WITH IMPACT ON
ECONOMIC/FINANCIAL POLICY IN SEPTEL. MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGES
ARE DEMOTION OF DR. J.F. CAIRNS AND CLYDE CAMERON, WHILE
CHANGE OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO U.S. IS NAMING OF WILLIAM
MORRISON AS MINISTER FOR DEFENSE. MEDIA REACTION TO CHANGES
AHS BEEN UNENTHUSIASTIC, AS THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE CHANGE IN
MINISTERIAL TEAM OVERALL. RESHUFFLE HAS CREATED RESENTMENTS
AND PROBABLY HAS NOT HELPED LABOR PROSPECTS IN BY-ELECTION
FOR TASMANIAN SEAT OF BASS JUNE 28, WHICH COULD HAVE SIGN-
IFICANT IMPACT ON POSSIBILITY OF EARLY GENERAL ELECTIONS.
OPPOSITION LEADERSHIP IN EUPHORIC MOOD, EVIDENTLY FEELING
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RECENT EVENTS, INCLUDING RESHUFFLE, HAVE ENHANCED ITS PRO-

SPECTS. END SUMMARY.

2. EVENING OF JUNE 5 PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM ANNOUNCED MAJOR RESHUFFLE OF LABOR CABINET. IN LIST AS ANNOUNCED, NO MEMBER HAS BEEN DROPPED, SINCE LABOR PARTY RULES LIMIT PRIME MINISTER TO RE-ARRANGING PORTFOLIOS ASSIGNED TO MEMBERS OF 27-MEMBER MINISTRY ELECTED BY LABOR PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS. 13 SHIFTS OF GREATER OR LESSER SIGNIFICANCE WERE INVOLVED. NEW CABINET AS FOLLOWS:

3. E.G. WHITLAM, PRIME MINISTER; DR. J.F. CAIRNS, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT; R.F.X. CONNOR, MINISTER FOR MINERALS AND ENERGY; W.G. HAYDEN, TREASURER; SENATOR K.S. WRIEDT, LEADER OF GOVERNMENT IN SENATE AND MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE; SENATOR D.R. WILLESEE, MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS; FRANK CREAN, MINISTER FOR OVERSEAS TRADE; F.M. DALY, MINISTER FOR SERVICES AND PROPERTY AND LEADER OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES; SENATOR DOUGLAS MCCLELLAND, SPECIAL MINISTER OF STATE; DR. R.A. PATTERSON, MINISTER FOR NORTHER AUSTRALIA; CR.R. CAMERON, MINISTER FOR EDUCATION; L.F. BOWEN, MINISTER FOR SOCIAL SECURITY AND MINISTER FOR REPATRIATION AND COMPENSATION; THOMAS UREN, MINISTER FOR URBAN AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT; SENATOR REGINALD BISHOP, POSTMASTER-GENERAL; L.R. JOHNSON, MINISTER FOR ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS; C.K. JONES, MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT; DR. DOUGLAS N. EVERINGHAM, MINISTER FOR HEALTH; K.E. ENDERBY, ATTORNEY-GENERAL; GORDON M. BRYANT, MINISTER FOR AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY; DR. MOSES H. CASS, MINISTER FOR MEDIA; SENATOR JAMES L. CAVANAGH, MINISTER FOR POLICE AND CUSTOMS; WILLIAM L. MORRISON, MINISTER FOR DEFENSE; FRANCIS E. STEWART, MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND RECREATION; SENATOR JAMES R. MCCLELLAND, MINISTER FOR LABOR AND IMMIGRATION; JOSEPH M. RIORDAN, MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND CONSTRUCTION. (FOREGOING LIST REFLECTS ORDER OF ELECTION OF MINISTERS AND IS IN NO RPT NO SENSE AN ORDER RANKING OF IMPORTANCE OF PORTFOLIOS.)

4. MORNING OF JUNE 6 CLYDE CAMERON, FORMER MINISTER FOR LABOR AND IMMIGRATION, DECLINED TO ACCOMPANY OTHER NEW MINISTERS TO BE SWORN IN BY GOVERNOR-GENERAL, MAKING CLEAR HE WOULD NOT ACCEPT WHAT AMOUNTS TO HIS DEMOTION TO MINISTER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOR SCIENCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS. HOWEVER, HE CHANGED HIS MIND AND WAS SWORN IN TWO HOURS LATER, AFTER GOVERNOR-GENERAL HAD REVOKED HIS MINISTERIAL COMMISSION, AT REQUEST OF PRIME MINISTER. THE COMMISSION WAS THEN RESTORED.

5. THERE ARE SEVERAL CHANGES WHICH ARE OF CONSIDERABLE SIGNIFICANCE. DEMOTION OF DR. J.F. CAIRNS TO MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT HAS PROBABLY BEEN COMING FOR SOME TIME AND MARKS

WHAT IS MOST LIKELY DEFINITIVE DECLINE OF THIS MERCURIAL AND PROMINENT LEFTIST. PROMOTION OF W.G. HAYDEN TO BE TREASURER IS SUBSTANTIAL STEP LIKELY TO HAVE RAMIFICATIONS OF SIGNIFICANCE IN ECONOMIC/FINANCIAL FIELD (SEE SEPTTEL). SHIFT OF SENATOR DOUGLAS MCCLELLAND TO BE SPECIAL MINISTER OF STATE (A PORTFOLIO EMBRACING VARIETY OF UNRELATED FUNCTIONS) PROBABLY REFLECTS WIDESPREAD CRITICISM OF HIS HANDLING OF DEPT OF THE MEDIA. DR. PATTERSON BECOMES MINISTER FOR NORTHERN AUSTRALIA, WHICH APPEARS TO INVOLVE SIMPLE RENAMING OF TWO FORMER PORTFOLIOS OF NORTHER DEVELOPMENT AND NORTHER TERRITORY. AS NOTED ABOVE, CLYDE CAMERON WAS DEMOTED TO MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS FROM MINISTER FOR LABOR AND IMMIGRATION PORTFOLIO. L.F. BOWEN, AS NEW MINISTER FOR MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY, HAS RECEIVED MODEST PROMOTION. SENATOR JOHN WHEELDON HAS HAD VERY LARGE ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES HEAPED ON HIM, COUPLING BURGEONING DEPT OF SOCIAL SECURITY WITH FORMER AND SUBSTANTIAL (IF COMPARATIVELY ROUTINE) PORTFOLIO OF REPATRIATION (SAME AS VETRANS ADMINISTRATION IN U.S.). L.R.R. JOHNSON, AS NEW MINISTER FOR ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS, HAS BEEN SHIFTED TO THIS PORTFOLIO LEFT VACANT BY SENATOR CAVANAGH, WHOSE ADMINISTRATION OF IT HAD BEEN MUCH CRITICIZED. DR. MOSES CASS, AS NEW MINISTER FOR THE MEDIA, HAD BEEN DIRECTLY CRITICIZED BY PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM FOR INEPT HANDLING OF FORMER PORTFOLIO OF ENVIRONMENT, AND THIS IS PROBABLY NOT RPT NOT A PROMOTION. SENATOR CAVANAGH HAS BEEN MADE MINISTER FOR POLICE AND CUSTOMS, WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR NEW DEPARTMENT IN WHICH FEDERAL POLICE SERVICES ARE TO BE BETTER OORDINATED AND ORGANIZED. MAJOR CHANGE FROM U.S. POINT OF VIEW IS NAMING OF WILLIAM MORRISON TO BE MINISTER FOR DEFENSE, REPLACING LANCE BARNARD, WHO RESIGNED FROM PARLIAMENT JUNE 2. ASSIGNMENT OF SENATOR JAMES MCCLELLAND (NO RPT NO RELATION TO SENATOR DOUGLAS MCCLELLAND) AS MINISTER FOR LABOR AND IMMIGRATION REFLECTS HIGH PRAISE PRIME MINISTER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WHITLAM HAS RECENTLY GIVEN TO MCCLELLAND'S PERFORMANCE AS MINISTER FORMANUFACTURING INDUSTRY. ASSIGNMENT OF JOSEPH RIORDAN AS MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND CONSTRUCTION IS CONSEQUENCE OF HIS ELECTION TO MINISTRY ON JUNE 3.

6. MEDIA REACTION TO CHANGES HAS BEEN UNENTHUSIASTIC, AS THERE IS LITTLE REAL CHANGE IN MINISTERIAL TEAM. MOREOVER, WHITLAM HAS PROBABLY HUR LABOR PARTY UNITY BY DEMOTION OF CAIRNS (HOWEVER MUCH CAIRNS HAS BEEN DAMAGED BY HIS OWN RECENT, ERRATIC BEHAVIOR) AND, PERHAPS MORE SERIOUSLY, BY DEMOTION OF CLYDE CAMERON. OPPOSITION LEADER FRASER AND OPPOSITION SHADOW MINISTER FOR LABOR A.A. STREET HAVE BOTH SAID THEY DID NOT RPT NOT CONSIDER THAT CAMERON HAD HANDLED HIS LABOR PORTFOLIO IN MANNER WHICH JUSTIFIED THIS DISMISSAL. DOWNGRADING OF BOTH CAIRNS AND CAMERON PROBABLY REFLECTS

WHITLAM'S LONGSTANDING WISH TO CUT DOWN THESE TWO MAJOR FIGURES IN ALP. CAIRNS HAD BEEN POTENTIAL RIVAL TO WHITLAM OVER PAST EIGHT YEARS, AND CAMERON HAD ONCE SUPPORTED CAIRNS AGAINST WHITLAM, SOMETHING WHICH PRIME MINISTER HAS OBVIOUSLY NEVER FORGOTTEN.

7. CABINET RESHUFFLE AND CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING IT HAVE PROBABLY NOT RPT NOT HELPED LABOR PROSPECTS IN BY-ELECTION IN TASMANIAN SEAT OF BASS JUNE 28, WHICH COULD HAVE SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON POSSIBILITY OF EARLY GENERAL ELECTIONS.

8. EMBOFF WHO SPENT MUCH OF EVENING OF JUNE 5 WITH OPPOSITION LEADERS AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE REPORTS OPPOSITION IN EUPHORIC MOOD, FEELING THAT DAMAGE DONE BY CABINET RESHUFFLE AND ERRATIC BEHAVIOR OF DR. CAIRNS IS UNMISTAKABLE SIGN OF DECAY OF LABOR PARTY AND, AS CONSEQUENCE, OF RELATIVELY EARLY RETURN OF OPPOSITION TO POWER. HOWEVER, OPPOSITION LEADER FRASER, IN TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR JUNE 6, APPEARED BY NO MEANS SURE OF OUTCOME OF TASMANIAN BY-ELECTION. HE SAID TASMANIA VERY MUCH UNLIKE REST OF AUSTRALIA, THAT RECENT POLL SAMPLINGS IN TASMANIA HAVE BEEN INCONCLUSIVE AND THAT EVEN NATION-WIDE POLLS ARE NOT RPT NOT NECESSARILY TO BE TAKEN AT FACE VALUE.
GREEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CABINET, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975CANBER03688
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750197-1153
From: CANBERRA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750671/aaaacmnb.tel
Line Count: 192
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 CANBERRA 3611
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 JUL 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <09 JUL 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AUSTRALIAN CABINET RESHUFFLED
TAGS: PGOV, AS, (MORRISON, WILLIAM), (CAIRNS, JAMES F), (CAMERON, CLYDE R)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006